

AMENDMENT

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An axle assembly comprising:
an axle housing;
a pump housing attachable to cover an opening within said axle housing;
a pump mounted within said pump housing, wherein said pump housing includes a cavity defining a supply passage for communicating lubricant from a sump within said axle housing to said pump; and
an input shaft supported by said pump housing and driving said pump.
2. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein said pump supplies lubricant from said sump within said axle housing to a driveline component supported within said axle housing.
3. (ORIGINAL) The assembly as recited in claim 2, comprising an annular passage defined within said pump housing surrounding said input shaft.
4. (ORIGINAL) The assembly as recited in claim 2, wherein said input shaft comprises a lubricant passageway receiving lubricant from said pump.
5. (ORIGINAL) The assembly as recited in claim 4, wherein said lubricant passageway comprises at least one outlet passage for distributing lubricant.
6. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The assembly as recited in claim 1, comprising a bearing supporting rotation of said input shaft, said bearing mounted within said pump housing.

7. (ORIGINAL) The assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein said pump housing comprises a filter housing for attachment of a lubricant filter.
8. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein said pump housing comprises a relief valve for controlling a lubricant pressure emitted from said pump.
9. (ORIGINAL) The assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein said pump comprises a rotor pump.
10. (ORIGINAL) The assembly as recited in claim 9, wherein said rotor pump comprises a reversing ring for directing oil flow in a first direction regardless of input shaft rotational direction.
11. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein said pump housing includes a bearing cage supporting rotation of said input shaft, wherein said bearing cage is supported entirely within said pump housing independent of said axle housing .
- 12-21. (CANCELLED)
22. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The assembly as recited in claim 1, including a bearing cage disposed within said pump housing and spaced an axial distance from said axle housing.
23. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The assembly as recited in claim 1, including a pinion shaft supported within said axle housing and driven by said input shaft.

24. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An axle assembly comprising:
an axle housing including an opening for an input shaft;
a pump housing attached to the axle housing over said opening;
a pump mounted within said pump housing and driven by said input shaft; and
a bearing member supported within said pump housing separate from said axle housing
for supporting rotation of said input shaft.
25. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The assembly as recited in claim 24, wherein said input shaft includes a lubricant passage for communicating lubricant into said axle housing.
26. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The assembly as recited in claim 25, wherein said lubricant passage comprise a first passage extending axially through said input shaft and a plurality of second passages in communication with said first passage that communicate lubricant outside said input shaft.
27. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The assembly as recited in claim 24, wherein said pump housing includes an inlet in communication with a sump within said axle housing and a cavity defining a supply passage within said pump housing from said inlet to said pump.
28. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The assembly as recited in ~~claim 24~~claim 27, wherein said pump housing includes an elongated section including said inlet and said cavity.
29. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The assembly as recited in claim 24, wherein said input shaft drives a pinion shaft supported for rotation within said axle assembly.